ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
December 18-19, 2002

TO:    Illinois State Board of Education

FROM:  Robert E. Schiller, Superintendent  
        Lynne Haeffele Curry, Director

Agenda Topic:  Discussion Item:  
The Condition of Education 2002

Materials:  Report available at the Board Meeting

Purpose of Agenda Item

To provide the Board with a report that will preview the 2002 Annual Report to the General Assembly, due January 14, 2003.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item

The Board will be positioned to discuss the key issues of student achievement, the educator workforce and school funding in advance of the Spring 2003 legislative session.

Background Information

The School Code [105 ILCS 5/1A-4(E)] requires that each year, the State Board provide the General Assembly with an annual report that “provides a critique and analysis of the status of education in Illinois, and which identifies its specific problems and recommends express solutions therefor.”

At the present time, Illinois faces a dilemma that all states in the nation must face: experiencing serious budget shortfalls at both the state and local level, while at the same time being subject to new and stringent federal requirements for improvement in student performance and educator qualifications.

The Superintendent has determined that it is in the best interest of Illinois students, educators and school districts that the State Board issue a preliminary report outlining the condition of Illinois education, and the various options the state may consider to create the nation’s best public education system.
In January, the State Board will forward an official Annual Report to the General Assembly, with specific policy and budget recommendations for its consideration, based on the options outlined in this preliminary report.

**Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action and Communications**

**Policy Implications**

The policies of the State Board regarding student achievement, the educator workforce and school funding have been well-established over the past several years. However, the Board will need to take specific positions on the various options outlined in the *Condition of Education 2002* report, including prioritizing possible actions, prior to the adoption and transmittal of the official Annual Report in January.

**Budget Implications**

The report outlines various budget options for (a) maintaining the status quo, (b) making moderate improvements over time, and (c) fully supporting a high quality system. The Board will develop specific budget recommendations prior to submitting its budget proposal to the General Assembly in January.

**Legislative Action**

This report lays the groundwork for action on the State Board budget in the Spring 2003 legislative session.

**Communication**

The *Condition of Education 2002* report will create the basis for statewide discussion with education partners, school district leaders and various media beginning in December.

**Superintendent’s Recommendation**

The Board should use the *Condition of Education 2002* report as a basis to develop budget proposal to be adopted in January 2003.

**Next Steps**

Make the report widely available to the public and provide opportunities for discussion with partners, school district leaders and the media.